



*About Harvest
The local choice*

Harvest represents a group of like minded individuals who are totally committed to providing real healthy produce grown locally. A Typical Harvest grower would be a small family business who are totally dedicated to the products they produce. The emphasis is always on locally produced to ensure top quality, freshness and support for the local community. Working in conjunction with the specialists at Sharrocks Fresh Produce the Harvest growers are constantly on the lookout for new and interesting products to grow, diversification being the key to their survival. If you are aware of any products that you wish to buy but cannot currently purchase from local suppliers then why not drop a line to the team at Sharrocks and we'll see what can be done.

freshproduce@sharrocks.com

Southport Samphire



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Samphire, also known as Glasswort, is a succulent edible seaweed that is considered a local delicacy and has been harvested in the north west for many decades.

Origins

From late June until mid-to-late September, Marsh Samphire is harvested from the muddiest parts of Southport and Banks' salt marshes and mud flats.

Originally "sampiere" from the French "Saint Pierre". Samphire - the word is a corruption of St. Peter - was named for the patron of fishermen because it grows mainly in rocky salt-sprayed regions along the sea coast.

It is an annual plant specific to salty areas that begins growing in late autumn and vegetates throughout the winter until the first warm weather arrives. Then the first stems form and by mid-spring the plant measures 6 to 8 cm.

In the old days, samphire ashes were used to make soap and glass (hence its other old English name, "glasswort.") In the 14th century glassmakers located their workshops near regions where this plant grew, since it was so closely linked to their trade.

Samphire has long been eaten in England. The leaves were gathered early in the year and pickled or eaten in salads with oil and vinegar. It is even mentioned by Shakespeare in King Lear: 'Half-way down Hangs one that gathers samphire; dreadful trade!' ...referring to the dangers involved in collecting it on rocky sea cliffs!

Medicinal uses

Samphire is known for its digestive and anti-flatulent properties. Culpepper wrote in the 17th century that samphire was useful in curing ailments relating to "ill digestions and obstructions," while being "very pleasant to taste and stomach." It also contains diuretic and depurative properties and is rich in iodine, phosphorus, calcium, silica, zinc, manganese and vitamins A, C and D. When pickled, it was often taken along by sailors on ocean voyages to combat scurvy.

Culinary uses

The crisp, salty, fleshy tender stalks of young samphire, gathered in May or June, can be eaten raw, plain or with a vinaigrette, alone or in a salad with other ingredients. As the season progresses samphire becomes a bit bitter and it is better to blanch it. Just a few minutes in boiling water will remove its bitterness and excess salt. Sometimes called "poor man's asparagus," it is delicious when boiled and served on its own or sautéed in a pan with butter, garlic and parsley as an accompaniment to fish, red or white meats or poultry. It's also delicious made into soup with twice its weight in half-cooked potato, a little butter and pepper. Pickled samphire is excellent with cold fish and meats, charcuterie or raclette. It can also be used to flavour mustard, mayonnaise or vinegar.

